

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A display system, comprising:

a display;

a processor;

an application program interface coupled to the display, wherein the interface comprises:

a uimanager which contains code which, when executed by the processor, generates either a default image or an image that is user-defined;

a first pointer which points to the code for generating the default image having a first look and feel during a first time in which an application program is executed by the application program interface; and

a second pointer which points to the code for generating the user-defined image having a second look and feel during a second time in which the application program is executed by the application program interface.

2. The display system as recited in claim 1, wherein the default image is generated during the first time in which the application program interface is independent of code within an operating system software.

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3. The display system as recited in claim 1, wherein the user-defined image is generated during the first time in which the application program interface is dependent of code within an operating system software.

4. The display system as recited in claim 3, further comprising:

a second application program;

a software component defined by the application program interface of the application program and the second application program, wherein the software component is invoked during runtime of the operating system to display an object created by the application program, wherein the appearance and operation of the displayed object is specific to the application program and may differ from that of another instance of the object created by a second application program.

5. The display system as recited in claim 4, wherein the application program is running under an operating system and the appearance and operation of the displayed object is substantially independent of the operating system.

6. The display system as recited in claim 4, wherein the object is part of a graphical user interface associated with the application program.

7. The display system as recited in claim 1, wherein the application program is written in the Java programming language.

8. The display system as recited in claim 4, wherein the software component contains an instruction sequence to implement the specific appearance and operation of the displayed object, and wherein said instruction sequence is executed only in response to the application program.

9. The display system as recited in claim 4, wherein the operating system comprises a computer operating system such as Windows, Unix or OS/2.

10. A computer-readable storage device comprising a system of software components that can be invoked during runtime by an application program to display an object, wherein the appearance and operation of the displayed object is characteristic of a specific operating system.

11. The storage device as recited in claim 10, wherein the operating system is OS/2.

12. The storage device as recited in claim 10, wherein the application program is running under a second operating system, distinct from OS/2, and the appearance and operation of the displayed object is characteristic of OS/2.

13. The storage device as recited in claim 10, wherein the object is part of a graphical user interface associated with the application program.

14. A method for displaying an object created by an application program, using at least one of a system of software components invoked during runtime and adapted to generate a graphical representation of the object, comprising:

providing the appearance and operation of the displayed object specific to the application program which may differ from that of another instance of the object created by a second application program;

defining a global setting for the appearance and operation for objects displayed by the system of software components;

defining a specific appearance and operation for the application program;

if an object is created by the application program, displaying the object using the specific appearance and operation; and

otherwise, displaying the object using the global appearance and operation setting.

15. The method as recited in claim 14, wherein the application program is running under an operating system and the appearance and operation of the displayed object is substantially independent of the operating system.

16. The method as recited in claim 14, wherein the object is part of a graphical user interface associated with the application program.

17. The method as recited in claim 14, wherein the application program is written in the Java programming language.

18. The method as recited in claim 14, wherein at least one of the system of software components contains an instruction sequence to implement the specific appearance and operation of the displayed object, and wherein said instruction sequence is executed only in response to the application program.

19. The method as recited in claim 14, wherein the operating system comprises a standard computer operating system such as Windows, Unix or OS/2.

20. A computer-readable storage device, comprising:

a windows-based operating system;

an application program running under the operating system;

a system of software components invoked during runtime and adapted for

displaying a graphical representation of objects created by the application program with a first characteristic appearance and behavior; and

displaying a graphical representation of objects created by a second application program with a second characteristic appearance and behavior, distinct from the first.

21. The computer readable medium as recited in claim 20, wherein the first characteristic appearance and behavior is substantially that of the OS/2 operating system.

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